



J. TYLER McCAULEY
AUDITOR-CONTROLLER

**COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
DEPARTMENT OF AUDITOR-CONTROLLER**

KENNETH HAHN HALL OF ADMINISTRATION
500 WEST TEMPLE STREET, ROOM 525
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90012-2766
PHONE: (213) 974-8301 FAX: (213) 626-5427

November 21, 2006

TO: Audit Committee

FROM: J. Tyler McCauley 
Auditor-Controller

SUBJECT: **SUNSET REVIEW FOR THE LOS ANGELES COUNTY COMMISSION
ON ALCOHOLISM**

RECOMMENDATION

The Audit Committee recommend to the Board of Supervisors to extend the Los Angeles County Commission on Alcoholism's sunset review date to March 31, 2011.

BACKGROUND

The Los Angeles County Commission on Alcoholism (Commission) was established by the Board of Supervisors (Board), and has been continued pursuant to Chapter 3.06 of the Los Angeles County Code. The most recent extension was approved by the Board in January 2002.

The Commission participates in planning for County alcohol programs, and advises the Board and County alcohol program administrator (Administrator) on the programs' policies and goals. In addition, the Commission reviews other alcohol-related issues referred to the Commission by the Administrator or the Board.

The Commission consists of 15 members. Members are representatives of public agencies and private organizations concerned with the prevention of alcoholism and the rehabilitation of persons suffering from alcoholism. At least three Commission members must have received aid from a public agency or private organization. The Commission is required to meet bimonthly, or when deemed necessary by the Administrator or Commission Chair. From July 1, 2001 through March 31, 2006, the Commission met 49 times, with an average attendance of 9.9 (66%) members.

Commissioners receive a \$25 stipend for each meeting attended, not to exceed \$50 a month. In addition, each Commissioner can be reimbursed for expenses incurred while traveling on Commission business. Commission expenses, including stipends, averaged \$96,000 a year.

JUSTIFICATION

The Commission was intended to reduce alcohol-related problems, and the negative impact these problems have on the quality of life in Los Angeles County. As an advisory board, the Commission works closely with the Administrator on alcohol-related policies, treatment, recovery and prevention, with input from various County departments, service providers and the public.

The Commission's accomplishments during the evaluation period include the following:

- Continued to host an annual Alcoholic Olympics to celebrate recovery and sobriety.
- Recommended that the Department of Public Health's Alcohol and Drug Program Administration conduct an outcome evaluation study on County-contracted alcohol and drug programs, in an effort to improve the overall delivery of County alcohol and drug services.
- Continued to evaluate and advise the Board and State government officials on legislative matters relating to alcoholism.
- Educated parents and children on the serious consequences of underage drinking by speaking at various events and distributing informational handouts.

The Commission's future objectives are to work with County Counsel, the Administrator and the Board to amend the Los Angeles County Code and better reflect the Commission's responsibilities and member qualification requirements; continue to host the annual Alcoholic Olympics event to celebrate recovery and sobriety; continue to educate parents and children about the consequences of underage drinking; continue to recommend policies to the Board that will best address the negative impact of alcohol abuse; and formulate goals and make recommendations to the Board based on findings from the UCLA Integrated Substance Abuse Programs' study.

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Please call if you have any questions.

JTM:MMO:JLS:MR

Attachments

- c: A. Stephanie Loftin, Chair, Commission on Alcoholism
- Jackalyn Moultrie, Assistant, Commission on Alcoholism
- Sachi A. Hamai, Executive Officer
- Robin A. Guerrero, Chief, Board Operations
- Jim Corbett, Manager, Commission Services

COMMISSION SUNSET REVIEW
LOS ANGELES COUNTY COMMISSION ON ALCOHOLISM
REVIEW COMMENTS

Mission. (Does the mission statement agree with the Board of Supervisors' purpose and expectations?)

Stated mission is as set forth in the ordinance creating the Commission.
CONCUR

Section 1. Relevance (Is the mission still relevant and in agreement with the Board of Supervisors' purpose and expectations?)

The Commission continues to advise and make recommendations to the Board and the County alcohol program administrator (Administrator) on alcohol-related issues to reduce the problems associated with alcoholism and the negative impact it has on the quality of life in Los Angeles County. **RELEVANT**

Section 2. Meetings and Attendance. (Are required meetings held and is attendance satisfactory?)

The Commission is required to meet bimonthly or when deemed necessary by the Commission Chair or Administrator. From July 1, 2001 to March 31, 2006 the Commission met 49 times, with an average attendance of 9.9 (66%) members. **SATISFACTORY**

Sections 3 and 4. Accomplishments and Results. (Are listed accomplishments and results significant?)

The Commission's accomplishments include the following:

- Hosted the Fifth Annual AI-impics (Alcoholic Olympics) to celebrate recovery and sobriety, and to aid the recovering community by promoting fellowship, brotherhood and unity. The event was held on September 17, 2005 at Compton College, with the support of several County-wide co-sponsors.
- Recommended, in conjunction with the Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs Commission, that the Department of Public Health's Alcohol and Drug Program Administration contract with UCLA Integrated Substance Abuse Programs to conduct an outcome evaluation study on County-contracted alcohol and drug programs. This study is designed to identify existing and needed services/practices and help improve the delivery of County alcohol and drug services. It will be performed on a quarterly basis.

- Continued to evaluate and advise the Board and State government officials on legislative matters relating to alcoholism. The Commission, in conjunction with other interest groups, sent letters to State Legislators and the Governor opposing Assembly Bill (AB) 417. AB 417 would allow sweetened alcoholic beverages to be the equivalent of beer, so that liquor companies could avoid the higher tax on beverages that contain distilled spirits. Following these recommendations, AB 417 was vetoed by the Governor in October 2005.
- Partnered with the regional Little League to distribute information to educate parents and children on underage drinking and its consequences. The Commission has also participated in the Spring Break Media event since 2001 by publicly speaking about underage drinking and associated problems.

SIGNIFICANT

Section 5. Objectives. (Are the objectives compatible with the mission and goals and relevant within the current County environment?)

The Commission's future objectives are to amend the Los Angeles County Code to clarify and better reflect the Commission's responsibilities and member qualification requirements; continue to host the Alcoholic Olympics event to celebrate recovery and sobriety; continue to educate parents and children about the consequences of underage drinking; continue to recommend policies to the Board that will best address the negative impact of alcohol abuse; and formulate goals and make recommendations to the Board based on findings from the UCLA Integrated Substance Abuse Programs' study. **RELEVANT**

Section 6. Resources. (Are the resources utilized by the entity in support of the entity's activities warranted in terms of the accomplishments and results?)

Commissioners receive a \$25 stipend for each meeting, not to exceed \$50 a month. Each Commissioner can also be reimbursed for expenses incurred while traveling on Commission business. Commission expenses, including stipends, averaged \$96,000 a year. **WARRANTED**

Section 7. Recommendation.

EXTEND THE SUNSET REVIEW DATE FOR THE LOS ANGELES COUNTY COMMISSION ON ALCOHOLISM TO MARCH 31, 2011.

